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Northfleet Urban District Council.



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

For the Year 1956

BY



M. F. McDONNELL, MB., B.Ch., B.A.O., D.P.H.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH



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NORTHFLEET URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year ended 31st December, 1956

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
NORTHFLEET URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in submitting my Annual Report for the year 1956 upon the public health circumstances of the Urban District of Northfleet.

Population. The Registrar General's estimate for the year was 19,850, an increase of 220 over the preceding year.

Births. Births during the year numbered 303, being 161 males and 142 females. This gives a birthrate for the district of 15.26 per 1,000 population—a decrease from 1955, when the number born was 300 and the rate 15.28. The birthrate for England and Wales for 1956 was 15.7.

Deaths. Deaths in Northfleet during the year numbered 215. This gives a rate per thousand population of 10.83 compared with a rate of 10.18 in 1955. The rate for England and Wales in 1956 was 11.7.

Natural Increase of the Population. Births registered for Northfleet during the year exceeded the deaths by 88. The figure for the corresponding period in 1955 was 100.

Infant Mortality Rate. During the year deaths of infants under one year of age numbered 5, representing a rate of 16.50. The corresponding rate for England and Wales in 1956 was 23.8.

Health Services in the Area. A summary of the Health Services provided by the Kent County Council as the Local Health Authority under the National Health Acts is included in the usual form in the report.

Atmospheric Pollution. Northfleet, as a constituent member of the Thames-side Advisory Committee for the abatement of atmospheric pollution, continued with its measurement of air pollutants in the district, and I have shown in the report the monthly variations, as shown by the contents of the standard deposit gauge.

One of the analysis is for sulphur derivatives which are respiratory irritants. The results show that in the winter months, when solid fuel consumption in domestic grates is at the maximum, sulphur gases in the air are nearly three times greater than in the summer months. This indicates that much of this air contaminant emanates from the domestic coal fire.

It is also in the winter months, when the coal consumption is highest, that the notification of, and deaths from, lung disease rise to three times the summer figure, part of which increase is, in all probability, associated with the increased air pollution.



Clean Smokeless Air. The Clear Air Act received the Royal Assent at the beginning of July last year but it was not until the end of December that real administrative action showed itself at the centre though, locally, many authorities had in the meantime taken preparatory steps themselves. There have no doubt been good reasons for the central delay but since clean air has been an acute problem with the public for at least four years that public has understandably felt rather disappointed and frustrated at the extra half year of marking time.

Taking the smoke control area memorandum first it is underlined, perhaps unnecessarily, that the areas will be established gradually "over a period of years in the larger towns," and it is also underlined, perhaps despondently, that the various kinds of smokeless fuels can be made available "over the next few years for a substantial start to be made." Exchequer grants to local authorities, who in their turn make rather larger grants to householders for adaptations are subject to adherence to various principles. Two interesting points here are that, first, bedroom fires not in regular use need not be adapted or replaced, and, secondly, necessary incidental works may include the provisions of gas ignition to open fireplaces. I take the view that gas ignition is desirable if it is at all reasonably practicable (it clearly would not be practicable in an all-electric house), and this for two main reasons: it is likely to be some years before an easily ignitable smokeless fuel, such as the newer cokes, will be in large supply; and in any event lighting a fire, especially a smokeless-fuel fire, with paper and wood is messy, untidy, dirty, and certainly smoky.

The snags in connection with the establishment of smoke control areas, already obvious in the Act, are made even more obvious by the Memorandum. "Areas which are wholly or predominantly industrial should not be included."

The second memorandum, on the miscellaneous provisions of the Act, deals in general with enforcement. For prior approval cases, except in the simplest furnaces, it is suggested that an approach might be made to the National Industrial Fuel Efficiency Service, or to a consultant, or to an *ad hoc* advisory panel. The more one studies the Act and the memoranda the more one realises how many technical points may arise even now with only part of the Act in force.—"PUBLIC HEALTH."

Early Portland Cement.—The Medway-Thames district of Kent is the historic home of cement, the essential ingredients of which, chalk and clay, occur locally and in Cliffe marshes.

In 1824 in Northfleet, Joseph Aspden devised what he called Portland cement. He invented this name because the colour and properties of concrete made from the cement reminded him of Portland stone, a variety of dolomite. What he made was only a calcined and not a clinkered mixture. The kiln which he used was still to be seen in Northfleet until 1943, when it was partly destroyed by air warfare.

Modern Portland Cement. Modern Portland cement was first made in 1845 in Swanscombe, Kent, by burning the raw materials at a temperature sufficiently high to vitrify or clinker the mass. The raw materials are transported from quarries to a crusher house, where they are broken into sizes convenient for grinding.

Significance of Exposure to Dust. The manufacture of Portland cement is carried on all over the world. Employees at different parts of the works are frequently exposed to heavy concentrations of dust. Both the nature of the dust and the extent of exposure have forced upon doctors the need to investigate the state of health of workers in the industry. Gardner and others (1939) made a survey of seventeen cement works employing 2,278 men. While their work showed the presence of a high concentration of dust in the atmosphere of the finishing mills and packing departments, the dust was found to contain but very little free silica.

Absence of the Hazard of Silicosis. In the department where the raw materials were crushed by a dry process, the dust was found to contain from 1 to 30 per cent. of silica. In spite of this, X-rays of the chest showed nodular silicosis in only eight out of the 2,278 employees, and in six of these previous exposure to silica dust in other jobs was evidently responsible. The incidence of tuberculosis and other chronic affections of the lung was found to be less than in the general population and it was concluded that prolonged inhalation of cement dust does not predispose to tuberculosis. In general, Gardner considered that, compared with the dust hazards in the mining and cutting of siliceous rock and other silica industries, the problem of dust disease of the lungs in the cement dust is trivial. (Hunter).

Infectious Disease. In the four weeks ended 29th December, 1956, 35 cases of a mild form of scarlet fever were notified. With two exceptions all the cases were school children attending Shears Green County Primary School. It was noted that three class rooms were affected, and, with the assistance of Dr. J. H. C. Walker, Director of the Public Health Laboratory Service, 130 children and teachers in these rooms were swabbed. The following is a summary of the results obtained :—

Nose and throat 14 positive.

Nose only 4 „

Throat only 26 „

making a total of 44. (It was subsequently reported that in 10 of these swabs streptococci were not Group A).

The overcrowding at this school was a major factor in the spread of the disease. The school was built to accommodate 350, and at the time of the outbreak 600 were in attendance. There was insufficient room in the classrooms for all the children, and classes had to be held in the passages and corridors.

Thorough cleansing and disinfection of the premises was carried out.

No cases of infectious disease were imported from abroad by ship.

B.C.G. Vaccination. One of the most successful procedures in preventative medicine is to commence shortly—B.C.G. vaccination of 13 year old school children whose parents want them to have this protection against T.B.

In the County of Kent there are more than 20,000 children of this age group. The risk of developing T.B. is greatest amongst teenagers, and so school children who have not acquired a natural resistance against T.B. should be protected by vaccination with B.C.G.

Most people, by the time they have reached adolescence, have developed a natural resistance to tuberculosis. This is due to small and repeated doses of infection, not sufficient to cause illness, but sufficient to produce some degree of immunity.

The earlier this naturally acquired resistance is established the better. If it is not established by the age of 15 to 17, in a young person, he or she is more vulnerable to the disease. B.C.G. vaccination is intended to give teenagers, who have not already established a natural resistance, an artificially produced one.

By a simple skin-test we can determine whether the child has already developed a natural resistance to tuberculosis. Skin-testing is therefore a preliminary to vaccination. A positive skin-test indicates that resistance is established, and nothing further is done. The negative reactors to the test are vaccinated.

Northfleet's Water Supply. I have been analysing the results obtained in the bacteriological examination of some 1,200 samples of raw and treated water from the so-called Meopham Well which were collected by the Health Department over a number of years. Up to 1948 the results were uniformly excellent. Since that year, when the housing programmes in the Northfleet and Meopham areas were in

full swing, it was noted that the bacteriological results obtained from the examination of the raw water showed a rapid deterioration. At one time 10% of the samples were unsatisfactory. However, the treated water was in every case above reproach.

A conference was held at the Ministry of Housing and Local Government in October, at which the Northfleet Urban, Strood Rural and Kent County Councils and Water Board were represented. The Board's case was as follows :—

The Board's area of supply lies principally on a broad outcrop of chalk formation rising from near sea level along the Thames Estuary to the escarpment in the North Downs which is generally some 600 ft. above sea level and which portion forms the southern boundary of the Board's area of supply. Rain falling on that area percolates through the chalk and is partly intercepted by wells and adits owned and operated by the Board.

The Board is conscious of its duties to the consumers in relation to the protection of its resources and the supervision of the drainage area around them. The Minister has from time to time in his publications issued guidance to Water Authorities on this subject.

- (a) “ Whatever the source of supply may be, and whether or not purification treatment is given to the water before it is brought into service, every effort should be made to secure that so far as is practicable the raw water is protected from pollution.”
- (b) “ A sudden rise in the bacterial population, particularly of the coliform group, after heavy rainfall will be regarded as indicative of potential danger, since experience has shown the sinister association of flood water and water-born disease.”
- (c) “ No matter how satisfactory the bacteriologist's analysis may be, a water can never be regarded as safe which is exposed to known sources of pollution. Water undertakings are advised to concentrate on the protection of their gathering grounds, and on the adequate treatment of water supplies, and to use the bacteriologist's report mainly as a check on the success of their endeavours. To adopt a laissez-faire policy and to do nothing until the bacteriologist's report shows that the pollution has reached a stage at which it can no longer be neglected is merely to court disaster.”
- (d) “ Where the well or borehole is on or near to the outcrop of the strata from which the water is drawn it should be the routine duty of the water undertakers' staff to make regular and frequent inspections of the area within at least two miles of the site of the well or boring with a view to detecting possible causes of pollution. Particular attention should be paid to any cesspools and soakaways in such an area and the water undertakers should satisfy themselves that danger to their source of supply is not likely to arise from them. Further, a map showing details of any sewerage system within this area should be kept.”
- (e) “ The Board have adopted what is considered to be a rational policy—
That wherever practicable new properties shall be connected to a system of main drainage with treatment and discharge outside the drainage area of the Board's resources.
- (f) That cesspool drainage would be acceptable in areas where the chalk outcrop is covered with a layer of clay of sufficient thickness to provide three feet of clay below the bottom of the cesspool ; provided that the emptyings from the cesspool are disposed of outside the drainage area.

- (g) That isolated properties on the bare chalk outcrop (such as farms and smallholdings) would be acceptable at some distance from the source provided that the sewage is treated in a biological filter with surface discharge. The adoption of this uniform policy has lead the Board to object to development which has already received outline approval from the County Council in areas where less stringent protection was formerly applied.

It is no exaggeration to say that the porous nature of the subsoil covering most of the Board's area of supply has made it possible for whole communities to congregate in rapidly developing dormitory areas where no main drainage system is in existence. It is hardly necessary to elaborate further on the potential dangers of this situation which must be apparent to everyone concerned. The position can be well illustrated by reference to the extensive housing development which is now projected for the area between the Board's Meopham Pumping Station and their new potential site at Hazells. In this area, as indeed in the whole locality, there is a complete absence of foul water main drainage system. The County Council have already given outline planning approval to the construction of 133 houses at Flower Hill Nursery. This outline approval was given after consultation with the former Gravesend Company who did not at that time object to the proposals because they were "downstream" of their Meopham Works, and Hazells site was then not contemplated. This site is now at its nearest point 1,100 yards from Hazells and is "upstream" of Hazells. As planned at the moment, each house would be provided with its own cesspit and each installation would cost in the region of £80. There is a foul water sewer at the northern end of Downs Road which is only 2,000 yards from the site. When this sewer was laid it is understood that provision was made for extension at a later date along Downs Road to accommodate the development area in question and also to take the sewage from the nearby Rural District Council's Meopham and Cobham areas.

At the end of the year the Northfleet and Strood Council's were actively considering the possibility of main drainage of the whole catchment area, which, from a Public Health point of view, is highly desirable.

In conclusion, I have again to record my appreciation of the help and encouragement afforded me by the Council during the year, and to extend to my fellow officers and staff my appreciation of their co-operation and loyalty.

Your obedient Servant,

M. F. McDONNELL,

Medical Officer of Health.

MEMBERS OF THE HEALTH COMMITTEE.

1956.

Councillor T. S. WHITE (Chairman)

„ A. J. C. FARLOW, C.C.

„ C. A. HALL

„ MISS I. B. F. McDOUGALL

„ K. H. PRICE, J.P.

„ MRS. M. VANCE

1957.

Councillor T. S. WHITE (Chairman)

„ A. J. C. FARLOW, C.C.

„ C. A. HALL

„ B. J. H. KING

„ K. H. PRICE, J.P.

„ MRS. M. VANCE

Member of No. 5 Area Sub-Committee, Kent County Council :

1956 Councillor Mrs. M. VANCE

1957. Councillor MRS. M. VANCE

Clerk to the Council :

MR. W. G. FUTCHER

Clerk and Solicitor to the Council :

MR. DREWERY F. BUNKALL

Officers in Public Health Department :

Medical Officer of Health : M. F. McDONNELL, M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O., D.P.H.

Chief Public Health Inspector : J. S. COWPLAND, C.S.I.E.B., Meat and Food Inspector

Additional Public Health Inspector : Vacant.

Clerk : MISS C. E. KEEN.

A. STATISTICAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF AREA

Area (Including 397 acres of Tidal and Inland Water and Foreshore) ...	4,162
Population (Census 1951)	18,803
Population (Census 1931)	16,080
Population (Registrar General's Estimate 1956)	19,850
No. of Inhabited Houses (31st December, 1956)	6,116
No. of New Houses erected during the year ended 31st December, 1956 ...	176
Rateable Value, 1956	£248,653
1955	£136,375
1954	£131,359
Sum represented by penny rate, 1956	£1,011
1955	£526
1954	£554

The high level of employment has increased considerably over the area during the past few years. The number of people employed in the major industries is shown by the tabulated list below as approximately 6,000.

	M.	F.	Total
The Amalgamated Press Ltd.	618	132	750
A.P.C.M. (Bevans Works)	620	59	679
Bowater's Thames Paper Mills	1,143	121	1,264
Britannia Lead Co., Ltd.	159	10	169
Gravesend Welding & Electrical Eng. Works Ltd.	119	10	129
W. T. Henley's Telegraph Co. and Tyre Co. ...	1,438	1,008	2,466

VITAL STATISTICS.

Births.

Births notified during 1956 total 303, 161 males and 142 females.
The number of births this year, 303, showed a slight increase compared with the preceding year, as shown in the table below :—

	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956
Number of Births	280	334	315	300	303
Birth Rate per 1,000 population	14.62	17.32	16.19	15.28	15.26
Number of Illegitimate Births ...	8	5	9	7	6

	Total	M.	F.
Still Births : Legitimate ...	6	3	3
Illegitimate ...	—	—	—

Deaths.

The registered deaths during the year totalled 215, 104 males and 111 females.

The numbers given are those registered during the year 1956, as adjusted for inward and outward transfers. I am informed that it is not practicable to include with the figures separate records of the inward and outward transfers.

The table below gives the comparison for the previous 4 years :—

	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956
Number of Deaths	226	205	199	200	215
Death Rate per 1,000 est. pop. ...	11.80	10.63	10.23	10.18	10.83

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age :—

Total Infant Deaths ... ..	...	...	...	...	5
All Infants per 1,000 Live Births ... ..	...	...	...	...	16.50
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 Legitimate Live Births ... ..	...	...	...	...	16.83
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 Illegitimate Live Births ... ..	...	...	...	...	Nil
Deaths from Measles, all ages ... ..	...	...	...	...	0
Deaths from Whooping Cough, all ages ... ..	...	...	...	...	0
Deaths of Infants under 4 weeks of age ... ..	...	...	...	...	2

CAUSES OF DEATHS IN NORTHFLEET URBAN DISTRICT, 1956.

Causes of Death.	Male	Female
All causes	104	111
Tuberculosis respiratory	1	2
Tuberculosis, other	—	—
Syphilitic disease	—	—
Diphtheria	—	—
Whooping Cough	—	—
Meningococcal infections	—	—
Acute poliomyelitis	—	—
Measles	—	—
Other infective and parasitic diseases	—	1
Cancer of stomach	4	1
Cancer of lung, bronchus	5	1
Cancer of breast	—	4
Cancer of uterus	—	—
Cancer of all other sites	9	5
Leukaemia, aleukaemia	—	—
Diabetes	—	1
Vascular lesions of nervous system	12	16
Coronary disease, angina	18	11
Hypertension with heart disease	1	1
Other heart disease	23	32
Other circulatory disease	5	4
Influenza	—	—
Pneumonia	3	3
Bronchitis	8	5
Other diseases of the respiratory system	2	4
Ulcer of the stomach or duodenum	1	1
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	1	—
Nephritis and nephrosis	1	—
Hyperplasia of prostate	1	—
Pregnancy, childbirth abortion	—	—
Congenital malformation	—	2
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	4	16
Motor Vehicle accidents	1	—
All other accidents	2	—
Suicide	2	1
Homicide	—	—

B. GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA

Services available under the National Health Services Act, 1946 and the National Assistance Act, 1948.

Care of Mothers and Young Children.

The Kent County Council are the responsible authority for providing these services and I am indebted to the County Medical Officer and his staff for the following information regarding facilities available and hours of attendance at the Clinics :—

Ante-Natal Clinics and Post-Natal Clinics.

Advice and ante-natal care is given and post-natal examinations are carried out :—

The Conservative Club, Perry Street—1st and 3rd Wednesday mornings.

Child Welfare Centres.

These centres are available for giving advice as to the care of infants and children under the age of five years. Infant foods, National Dried Milk and Ministry of Food Vitamin products are issued. A Medical Officer and a Health Visitor are in attendance at each centre.

Council Offices Annexe—Thursday afternoons.

Toddlers, 1st Thursday.

Conservative Club, Perry Street—Wednesday afternoons.

Harden V.C. Memorial Hall—Tuesday afternoons.

Istead Rise Memorial Centre—1st and 3rd Tuesday afternoons.

Diphtheria Immunisation and Vaccination.

Facilities for diphtheria immunisation and vaccination are available at the Council Offices, Northfleet, on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 10 to 11 a.m., and at all Child Welfare Centres.

Domestic Help Service.

This service is to provide domestic help for households where such help is required owing to the presence of any person who is ill, lying in, an expectant mother, mentally defective, aged, or a child not over compulsory school age. Evening service and night attendant service is also provided for elderly persons. Family Help Service can be arranged during the absence of the mother from home. Householders are required to contribute towards the cost in accordance with their means.

Application should be made to :—

Miss J. M. Cook,

District Office,

Arthur Street, Gravesend.

Telephone: Gravesend 166.

Health Visitors.

These officers are appointed for the purpose of giving advice as to the care of young children, persons suffering from illness and expectant and nursing mothers and as to the measures necessary to prevent the spread of infection.

The Health Visitors also undertake duties in connection with the School Health Service.

Health Visitors :—

Mrs. M. Marks, S.R.N.

Mrs. I. Cross, S.R.N.

M. & C.W. Department, Council Offices, Northfleet.

Domiciliary Midwifery Service.

This service, which is free, is to secure that an adequate number of midwives is employed by the County Council for attending women in their own homes, either as midwives or maternity nurses.

The names and addresses and telephone number of County Midwives in the area are given below.

Midwives :—

*Miss L. M. Mills,

85 Whitehill Road, Gravesend.

Gravesend 2980

*Miss E. M. Hudson,

1 Lawrence Drive, Cobham.

Cobham 328

Miss A. J. Woods,

37 Hardy Avenue, Northfleet.

Gravesend 5165

Mrs. D. M. Kemp,

71 Landseer Avenue, Northfleet.

Gravesend 3708

*Miss Mills serves only Burch Road, Cross Road, Lansdowne Square and Pier Road, the remainder of her district being in Gravesend.

*Miss Hudson serves only Arcadia Road, Downs Road and Lewis Road, all in Istead Rise, the remainder of her district being in Strood Rural District.

Facilities are available to expectant mothers for booking and examination by Midwives at M.C.W. Centre, Council Offices, every other Wednesday 2-4 p.m., and at the M.C.W. Centre, Conservative Club, Perry Street, Northfleet, 1st and 3rd Thursdays, 2-4 p.m.

Home Nursing Service.

This service, which is free, is to secure the attendance of nurses on persons who require nursing in their own homes. Apart from cases of emergency and accident, patients can only be attended when the nurse has been requested to do so by a doctor. At the present time it is not possible to provide a night service.

The names, addresses and telephone numbers of Home Nurses in the area are given below.

Home Nurses : Mrs. D. Paine, S.R.N.,
16 Lamorna Avenue, Gravesend.
Telephone : Gravesend 4654.

Mrs. M. A. Heppenstall, S.R.N.,
147 Waterdales, Northfleet.
Telephone : Gravesend 6675.

Relief : Mrs. M. Cake,
7 St. Hilda's Way,
Parrock Farm Estate, Gravesend.
Telephone : Gravesend 4463

County Ambulance Service.

The County Council is responsible for the provision of a comprehensive ambulance service throughout the County. Other than in cases of accident and emergency, no ambulance will be provided except on the recommendation of a doctor, midwife, or hospital, and in the case of sitting-case cars a special form has to be completed and signed by a doctor.

In cases of accident or emergency, if an ambulance is required, telephone '999' (or as indicated in the telephone directory or public telephone box), and ask the operator for "Ambulance."

Provision of Nursing Requisites.

Arrangements have been made with the British Red Cross Society and St. John Ambulance Brigade for the continuance of the Medical Loan Depots, on behalf of the County Council. The full range of nursing requisites are available at these depots and details of the addresses and the times the depots are open for distribution are available in the district offices. These arrangements are in addition to the loan cupboards kept by District Nurses. The depots deal with all applications for the loan of nursing requisites.

Northfleet: (St. John) Mrs. H. Banks, 137 Vale Road, Monday to Friday, 7.30 p.m.- 9 p.m. (Mr. C. J. Sims, Telephone: Gravesend 3517).

Mental Welfare.

Dr. L. M. Allen, Senior Assistant County Medical Officer, is Medical Officer for Mental Welfare. Dr. Allen's address is County Hall, Maidstone (Telephone: Maidstone 4321).

An Occupation Centre for mentally defective children is held at the Anglo-Saxon Hall, Berkley Road, Gravesend, from Monday to Friday each week, 10 a.m. to 3.30 p.m., and children from the Northfleet area may attend this Centre if suitable. A home teacher for defectives unsuitable or unable to attend the Centre is also available in the area. Information regarding this service can be obtained from the County Medical Officer, County Hall, Maidstone.

Blind Persons.

Information on matters affecting the blind can be obtained from the County Medical Officer, County Hall, Maidstone (Tel. Maidstone 4321—ext. 588), and the Secretary of the Kent County Association for the Blind, 15 Ashford Road, Maidstone (Telephone: Maidstone 3717).

Financial assistance is provided by the National Assistance Board, at the address below:—

"Rosedene," 61 Shepherds Lane, Dartford.

A Local Officer is now available at "Ravenscourt," Pelham Road, Gravesend. The hours of attendance are 2-4 p.m. daily and 9 a.m.-12 noon on Saturdays.

School Health Service.

The following clinics are available for children attending schools in Northfleet:—

Minor Ailments: West Kent House, Station Road, Northfleet. Medical Officer attends every Saturday morning 9.30 a.m.-12 noon.

Dental: West Kent House, Station Road, Northfleet. Dental Surgeon attends every Monday and Tuesday, alternate Wednesdays and Saturdays. Except in emergencies children are treated by appointment only.

Ophthalmic :	Gravesend and North Kent Hospital	} Attendance at these clinics is by appointment only. Application should be made to the Principal School Medical Officer, County Hall, Maidstone.
Speech Therapy :	107 Rochester Road Denton, Gravesend.	
Child Guidance :	118 Maidstone Road, Chatham.	

District Officers.

These officers are responsible for :

- (a) Duties as Authorised Officers under the Lunacy and Mental Treatment Acts and Mental Deficiency Acts.
- (b) Acting as representatives of the County Health Department in dealing with inquiries made by the public and arranging for County Health Services to be made available in cases of difficulty.
- (c) Carrying out the duties of the County Council under the National Assistance Act in (i) arranging admissions of old, handicapped and homeless people to residential establishments other than in cases of sickness, and (ii) the care of movable property of patients who are admitted to hospital or to residential establishments provided by the Council, where it appears that there is danger of loss or damage to the property.
- (d) Distribution of Welfare Foods.

District Officer : Mr. G. T. Jeffery, Arthur Street, Gravesend.
Telephone : Gravesend 166.

Hospital Services.

The hospital and specialist services, including institutions for the chronic sick, mental homes, maternity homes, convalescent homes, chest clinics and out-patients' departments are administered by the Regional Hospital Boards set up by the Minister of Health, the South-East Metropolitan Regional Board is responsible for all hospitals in Kent, but for day-to-day administration Hospital Management Committees have been set up to deal with groups of hospitals. Generally speaking admission to hospital is a matter for the doctor in charge of the patient and he will make arrangements direct with the hospital authorities, calling upon the County Ambulance Service for the removal of the patient to hospital where this is considered necessary.

Nursery School.

The Northfleet Nursery School provides accommodation for the daily care of children between the ages of 3 and 5 years. Priority is given to the children of mothers who must go to work in order to supplement insufficient wages, widows, children living in unhealthy, cramped home conditions, or where a doctor recommends admittance because of unsuitable home life. The staff is trained to deal with difficult children who need more psychological understanding than that provided at home.

Hours of attendance at the Nursery Schools are from 9 a.m. to 3.30 p.m., with normal school holiday periods. Meals are provided for the sum of 2/6d. per week. In addition to the ordinary diet, Ministry of Health Cod Liver Oil Compound, Orange Juice and two-thirds of a pint of milk may be given.

At present 40 children are accommodated at the Nursery—most of them being from the Northfleet area—Application for admission should be made to the Superintendent (Mrs. Dowker), at the Northfleet Nursery School, London Road, Northfleet.

Reference Expert for Plague.

From 1st April, 1957, Dr. R. S. F. Hennessey will replace Dr. M. T. Parker as reference expert for the investigation of plague. Material should be sent to him at the Wellcome Laboratories of Tropical Medicine, 183 Euston Road, London, N.W.1. (Telephone : Euston 4688).

Treatment of Anthrax, Botulism, Snake-bite and Mushroom Poisoning.

List of the nearest centres which keep emergency supplies of sera for the treatment of anthrax, botulism, snake-bite and mushroom (*Amanita phalloides*) poisoning. A 24-hour service is maintained at each centre.

	Telephone No.
Region 6 : N.E. Metropolitan North Middlesex Hospital, N.17. Day—Chief Pathologist. Night—Resident Pathologist.	Tottenham 3071
Region 7 : S.E. Metropolitan South East Sub-Depot, Weaving House, Ashford Road, Maidstone, Kent. Day Service Night Service	Maidstone 4468 Maidstone 3604 Maidstone 4660 Maidstone 3718
Region 8 : S.W. Metropolitan South London Blood Supply Depot, Stanley Road, Sutton, Surrey.	Vigilant 8221
The Dispensary, Royal South Hants and Southampton Hospital (Snake Anti-Serum only)	Southampton 76211

Registrar of Births and Deaths.

Mr. D. A. Gough,

Hours of attendance :

6 Berkley Crescent, Gravesend.	Mondays	9.30— 1 p.m.
	Tuesdays	2.00— 4 p.m.
	Wednesdays	9.30— 1 p.m.
	Thursdays	9.30— 1 p.m.
		2.00— 4 p.m.
	Fridays	9.30— 1 p.m.
	Saturdays	9.30—11 a.m.
36 Springhead Road, Northfleet	Mondays	2.00— 4 p.m.
	Fridays	5.00— 6 p.m.

Convalescent Treatment and Recuperative Care.

Convalescent treatment is that provided for a patient requiring more or less continued medical or nursing care and is the responsibility of the Regional Hospital Board, 11 Portland Place, London, W.1., to provide and arrange such treatment.

Recuperative care can be provided by the County Council as Local Health Authority where the person has suffered from an illness which has been treated at home or in hospital and, whilst still in need of medical or nursing care of the type provided by a general practitioner or home nurse, the home conditions are such that the patient cannot recuperate at home. The County Council is required to make a charge for this service assessed under the County Council's regulations in accordance with the patient's means and an agreement must be signed to make such payment to the Council as is assessed.

Family Help Service.

The above service caters for children who would be taken into County care during the absence of the mother due to illness, etc. Application is made to the Children's Officer, who then contacts the County Medical Officer. The Domestic Help Organiser visits the home to discuss hours of duty—payment for food, etc., and the Health Visitor gives a report on home conditions as she knows them. The Family Help cares for the children and the home while father is at work—if necessary staying overnight.

NIGHT ATTENDANT SERVICE.

Night attendant service is now available for old people but is limited to cases where the help required cannot be provided by voluntary agencies. The arrangements include evening service, preparation for sleep, provision of meals, attention to fires and night service. Application for this service should generally be made through the family doctor. Further information is obtainable from the Domestic Help Organiser, Miss J. M. Cook, District Office, Arthur Street, Gravesend. Telephone: Gravesend 166.

NORTHFLEET OLD PEOPLE'S WELFARE COMMITTEE.

The Northfleet Old People's Welfare Committee continued its activities throughout the year.

The Committee, whose members are formed from various local organisations, is maintained by voluntary subscriptions and grants from charitable organisations.

It is affiliated to the Kent Council of Social Service, and its objects are to provide facilities for physical and mental recreation, the relieving of poverty, distress or sickness and the pursuing of any objects of a charitable nature not otherwise provided for by statutory authorities or local organisations.

Amongst other things, the Committee helped more than 50 people financially and Christmas gifts valued ten shillings were given to 150 old people, and outings arranged, similar to last year.

The chiropody scheme now covers more people, also, some sickroom requirements, rubber sheets, bedpans, etc., are available for loan, free of charge.

This Committee, which was formed in 1951, is progressing most satisfactorily. Mr. N. Cobble is Chairman of the Committee for the year 1956/7, and the Honorary Secretary is Mrs. I. Walter, 44 Seymour Road, Northfleet.

C. WATER SUPPLY.

Date of Sample, 1956.	Probable number per 100ml. of Coliform bacilli. Faecal coli.		Remarks.
19th January	1	None	Highly satisfactory.
	None	None	" "
	None	None	" "
	None	None	" "
23rd January	None	None	" "
	None	None	" "
8th February	None	None	" "
	None	None	" "
	5	None	Suspicious.
	None	None	Highly satisfactory.
14th March	None	None	" "
	13	None	—
	None	None	Highly satisfactory.
	None	None	" "
11th April	None	None	" "
	None	None	" "
	None	None	" "
	None	None	" "
9th May	None	None	" "
	None	None	" "
	None	None	" "
	None	None	" "
6th June	None	None	" "
	None	None	" "
	None	None	" "
	None	None	" "
11th July	None	None	" "
	1	None	—
	None	None	" "
	None	None	" "
1st August	1	None	—
	None	None	Highly satisfactory.
	None	None	" "
11th September	1	None	Unsatisfactory.
	None	None	Highly satisfactory.
	None	None	" "
	None	None	" "

Probable number per 100ml. of
Coliform bacilli. Faecal Coli.

10th October	None	None	Highly satisfactory.
	None	None	Highly satisfactory.
	None	None	Highly satisfactory.
	None	None	Highly satisfactory.
7th November	None	None	Highly satisfactory.
	None	None	Highly satisfactory.
	None	None	Highly satisfactory.
	None	None	Highly satisfactory.
13th December	None	None	Highly satisfactory.
	None	None	Highly satisfactory.
	None	None	Highly satisfactory.
	None	None	Highly satisfactory.

In addition to submitting samples for bacteriological examination a chemical analysis is obtained from the Kent County Analyst, as necessary.

The Analyst's reports for 1956 are given below :—

PHYSICAL CHARACTERS.

				1	2	3
				Clear	Clear	Clear
Odour	...	...	...	None	None	None
Deposit	...	...	...	None	None	None
pH	...	...	...	7.66	7.80	7.65

CHEMICAL EXAMINATION. Parts per Million

Solids in Suspension (Dried at 100 deg. C)		331	332	330
Solids in Solution (Dried at 180 deg. C)		287	320	304
" " After ignition	...	15	14	16
Bicarbonate Alkalinity	...	250	245	240
Total hardness	... ..	260	256	248
Free and Saline Ammonia (as Nitrogen)	...	none	none	none
Albuminoid Ammonia (as Nitrogen)	...	none	none	none
Nitric Nitrogen (Nitrates)	... ..	4	5	3
Nitrous Nitrogen (Nitrates)	... ..	none	none	none
Oxygen Absorbed in $\frac{1}{4}$ hour at 26.7°C	...	0.04	0.09	0.03
" " " 4 hours at 26.7°C	...	0.09	0.16	0.04
Toxic Metals	... ..	not	not	not
		detected	detected	detected
Free and Combined Residual Chlorine on		not	not	0.05
Receipt	... ..	detected	detected	

BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATION.

Number of Colonies developing upon agar

(a) In two days at 37°C	... ..	2 per ml.	41 per ml.	5 per ml.
(b) In three days at 22°C	... ..	135 " "	470 " "	8 " "
Presumptive Coliform count per 100 ml.	...	none	none	none
Including Faecal Coli	... ..	none	none	none

All samples were fit for drinking.

D. PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

The statement below shows the number of cases of notifiable diseases occurring over the previous 5 years :—

	1952		1953		1954		1955		1956	
	No.	Deaths	No.	Deaths	No.	Deaths	No.	Deaths	No.	Deaths
Scarlet Fever	24	—	28	—	22	—	83	—	74	—
Diphtheria	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Measles	75	—	188	—	2	—	478	—	46	—
Enteric or Typhoid	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Whooping Cough	61	—	55	2	91	—	4	—	44	—
Smallpox	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pneumonia	14	4	17	5	6	5	12	4	20	6
Dysentery	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cerebro Spinal Meningitis	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Erysipelas	1	—	1	—	2	—	3	—	3	—

Application for the admission of infectious diseases to hospital should be made to the Medical Superintendent of the River Hospital, Joyce Green. Telephone : Dartford 3231. In the case of smallpox, admission to hospital is arranged by the Consultant who diagnoses the disease or by the Medical Officer of Health on his behalf.

Scarlet Fever.

Cases notified during year ... 74

Diphtheria.

No cases were notified.

Poliomyelitis.

One case (paralytic) was notified during the year.

IMMUNISATION AND VACCINATION.

I have received the following returns giving (a) the number of children resident in the district who were immunised against Diphtheria and (b) the number of persons who were vaccinated against smallpox during the year 1956 :

(a) Diphtheria Immunisation.

Year of Birth	1956	1955	1954	1953	1952	1951	1950	1949	1948	1947	1946	1945	1944	1943	1942	Total
Primary Innoculations	24	176	17	4	9	7	7	5	5	14	2	—	—	—	—	270
Re-inforcing Inoculations	—	—	—	1	29	150	26	7	33	199	17	2	2	1	—	467

(b) Vaccination.

Year of Birth	1956	1955	1954	1953	1952	1951	1950	1949	1948	1947	1946	1945	1944	1943	1942	Before 1942	Total
Primary Vaccination	142	75	2	1	—	1	—	1	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	3	227
Re-Vaccination	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	1	1	—	—	—	5	9

The following return shows the number of children resident in the district and under the age of 15 years on the 31st December, 1956, who had completed a course of immunisation at any time before that date, that is, at any time since 1st January, 1942.

Year of Birth	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	Total
Last complete course of injections (whether primary or booster) 1952-1956	2	7	19	22	74	336	231	225	224	292	234	262	271	206	24	2492
1951 or earlier	131	172	119	134	167	25	20	94	65	3	—	—	—	—	—	930

TUBERCULOSIS.

The following statement relates to the number of cases appearing on the Council's Register at 31st December, 1956 :—

	Pulmonary.			Non-Pulmonary.			Pul. and Non-Pul. Totals
	M.	F.	Total	M.	F.	Total	
(a) No. of cases of Tuberculosis on the register at the commencement of the year ...	125	85	210	10	9	19	229
(b) No. of cases remaining on register at the end of the year	129	83	212	10	11	21	233
(c) No. of cases notified during the year ...	8	3	11	—	—	—	11
(d) No. of deaths during the year	2	2	4	—	—	—	4

Ages and occupations of persons notified during the year are as follows :—

Age		Occupation.
M.	F.	
	36	Housewife and part-time domestic help
64		Pumpman—Paper Mills
	34	Housewife
61		Seaman
47		Labourer—Cement
19		R.N. Signals
	34	Housewife
48		Paper Maker
20		R.N. Signals
21		Radio Engineer
55		Milk Roundsman

GRAVESEND CHEST CLINIC.

Contacts 1956.

No. of Northfleet persons examined as Contacts :—

(a) Contacts examined for the first time ...	112
(b) Re-examination of Contacts examined in previous years	251
TOTAL persons examined as Contacts	363
(c) Re-attendance of Contacts in 1956 ...	60
TOTAL examinations	423

Number of Contacts of 1956 Tuberculous Cases (included in above) ... 49

Number of Contacts found Tuberculous	Age 0-14 ...	1
	Over 15 ...	1

VENEREAL DISEASES.

This Clinic, under the administration of the Medway and Gravesend Hospital Management Committee, is conducted by C. D. Routh, Esq., M.D., M.R.C.P. The following particulars refer to patients from Northfleet.

NEW PATIENTS (NORTHFLEET).					Male.	Female.	Total
Syphilis	...	...	...	...	1	—	1
Gonorrhoea	...	...	...	...	3	3	6
Non-venereal	...	...	...	...	18	2	20
Total					22	5	27

Total No. of new patients from all areas	...	200
Total No. of attendances from all areas	...	1,279
Total No. of attendances from Northfleet	...	159

DISCHARGES (ALL DISTRICTS) CURED.					Male	Female	Total
Syphilis	...	...	...	...	6	9	15
Gonorrhoea	...	...	...	...	22	18	40
Non-Venereal	...	...	...	...	101	19	120
Total					129	46	175

PROMOTION OF CLEANLINESS, GOOD HABITS AND THE ELIMINATION OF VERMINOUS CONDITIONS.

No Northfleet residents required treatment at the Brookvale Cleansing Station during the year.

ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION.

Northfleet is a constituent member of the Thames-side Advisory Committee for the Abatement of Atmospheric Pollution. The Committee have a comprehensive system of air pollution measurement, and Northfleet has a standard deposit gauge situated at Huggens College. The following is the tabulated results obtained by this gauge for the 12 months ending 31st December, 1956 :—

Monthly Deposit in Grams per 100 square metres, 1956.

	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June
Rain in inches ...	68.96	6.79	22.89	33.79	11.32	46.58
Water-Insoluble Matter ...	681	762	1,269	1,259	1,131	667
Soluble in C.S.2 ...	3	3	3	2	2	7
Ash ...	526	621	982	1,024	867	477
Other Combustible Matter...	151	139	284	233	263	184
Total Water Soluble Matter	837	541	811	629	499	482
Calcium (Ca ^{xx}) ...	200	133	201	182	120	155
Chloride (Cl') ...	68	38	39	29	26	32
Sulphate (SO ^{''} ₄) ...	297	251	349	260	180	184
Total Solids ...	11,518	1,303	2,080	1,888	1,630	1,149

	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Rain in inches ...	91.06	73.17	41.84	40.00	15.26	52.90
Water-Insoluble Matter ...	676	885	974	790	1,060	423
Soluble in CS2 ...	4	3	3	3	1	3
Ash ...	451	599	731	624	820	340
Other Combustible Matter...	222	283	240	164	238	81
Total Water Soluble Matter	769	821	526	669	720	655
Calcium (Ca ^{xx}) ...	190	195	176	197	167	153
Chloride (Cl') ...	37	50	21	41	36	41
Sulphate (SO ^{''} ₄) ...	167	215	200	279	307	269
Total Solids ...	1,445	1,706	1,501	1,459	1,779	1,079

Estimation of Sulphur Lead Peroxide Method.

	Area exposed	Weight of BaSO4			Wt. of SO3 collected	Mg. of SO3/day collected by 100 sq. cm. of Batch A PbO2 (louvred cover)
		in sample	in control	due to exposure		
	sq.cm.	mg.	mg.	mg.	mg/100 sq.cm/day	
January	100	158.4	4.4	154.0	1.76	1.58
February	100	180.0	3.4	176.6	2.09	1.88
March	100	152.0	4.0	148.0	1.54	1.39
April	95	81.2	7.4	73.8	0.95	0.86
May	100	78.0	4.0	74.0	0.82	0.74
June	100	65.2	2.6	62.6	0.69	0.62
July	95	46.8	2.0	44.8	0.54	0.49
August	95	53.2	1.0	52.2	0.57	0.51
September	100	49.2	1.2	48.0	0.59	0.53
October	95	103.6	2.2	101.4	1.18	1.06
November	95	191.2	2.4	188.8	2.27	2.04
December	95	121.2	1.5	119.7	1.39	1.25

E. HOUSING.

Number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects under Public Health and Housing Acts	...	...	...	...	...	535
Number of houses found to be in any respect unfit for human habitation	...					134
Number of houses found to be unfit for human habitation and incapable of repair at reasonable expense	...	...	...	...	...	Nil
Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied by informal action						114
Number of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices	...	...	...	...	...	20
Number of dwelling houses in respect of which demolition orders were made						10
Number of houses demolished	...	...	...	...	...	2
Number of houses closed in pursuance of an undertaking given under Section II of the Housing Act, 1936	...	...	...	...	...	2
Number of dwelling houses reconditioned and undertakings cancelled	...					Nil

HOUSING REPAIRS AND RENTS ACT, 1954.

Number of Certificates issued during the year on request from the occupier : One.

Number of Revocation Certificates issued during the year : Five.

F. INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

FOOD PREPARING PREMISES.

Restaurants, restaurant kitchens and canteens are subjected to routine inspection by the Public Health Inspectors at regular intervals.

CARCASES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED.

Number Killed (if known)	...	Cattle excluding Cows.	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
		Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil.

MILK.

(a) Milk and Dairies Regulations, 1949 (Part III).

No of registered distributors	One
No. of registered dairies	One

(b) Licences Granted under Milk (Special Designations) Regulations, 1949, excluding licenses granted by Food and Drug authorities in relation to milk pasteurised or sterilised on the premises of the applicant.

		Dealers.	Supplementary.
Pasteurised	...	4	6
Sterilised	...	32	5
T.T. (raw)	...	1	3
Accredited	...	Nil	Nil

(c) Milk Sampling.

		Samples Taken.	Number of Unsatisfactory Samples.
Pasteurised	...	28	1
T.T. ...	...	Nil	Nil
Sterilised	...	8	Nil
Accredited	...	Nil	Nil
Biological Examination of raw milks	...	Nil	Nil

ICE CREAM (HEAT TREATMENT) REGULATIONS, 1947 and 1948.

No premises in the district are registered for the manufacture of ice cream under these Regulations, but there are 55 premises registered for the sale of ice cream.

Forty samples of ice cream were submitted to the County Laboratories during the year for the Methylene blue test, and the following results were obtained :—

Grading	I	II
	29	11

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, 1955.

Northfleet Council is not a Food and Drugs Authority under the Food and Drugs Act, this part of the Act being administered by the Kent County Council under the direction of Mr. S. Strugnell, to whom I am indebted for the following information relating to the sampling of food which has taken place in the district during the year.

Article.	No. of Samples.					
Adrexalin	I
Almond Flavouring	I
Avomine Promethazine—8 Chlorotheophyllinate	I
Blanc Mange Powder	I
Boracic Acid	I
Borax and Honey	I
Brandy	I
Broad Beans	I
China Tea—	I
Cinnamon	I
Coffee and Chicory Essence	I
Custard Powder	I
Dextrosol	I
Garden Peas	I
Gin	3
Grapefruit Marmalade	I
Halibut Oil Capsules	I
Honey	I
Horseradish Relish	I
Hot Chocolate	I
Ice Cream	I
Koray	I
Malt Vinegar	2
Marmalade	I
Marzipan	I
Milk	24
Mixed Vegetables	I
Orange Squash	I
Pickled Beetroot in Malt Vinegar	I
Pickled Walnuts	I
Pure Malt Vinegar	I
Soya Flour	I
Spray Skim Milk Powder	I
Stringless Green Beans	I
Syrup of Figs	I
Table Jelly	I
Thick Bone Broth with Beef and Vegetable	I
Tomato Ketchup	I
Turmeric	I
Vykmin	I
Weetabix	I
Whisky	I
White Pepper	I
Zinc Castor Oil	I
Total						70

Summary.

Milks	...	...	24
Drugs	...	...	10
Spirits	...	...	5
Other samples	...	...	31
			70

All the above were genuine with the exception of the following :—

Sample of	Analysis	Action taken
Channel Islands Pasteurised Milk.	3.75% deficient in fat.	Follow up sample satisfactory. No further action necessary.
Channel Islands Pasteurised Milk.	2.5% deficient in fat.	Follow up samples satisfactory. No further action necessary.

OTHER FOODS CONDEMNED.

The following is the summary of foods condemned as unfit for human consumption by the Public Health Inspectors in the course of their routine duties during the year :—

Articles Condemned.						Amount.	
						lb.	ozs.
Canned Meat	...	...	...	...	...	91	—
„ Fruit	...	...	...	...	...	58	—
„ Milk	...	...	...	...	...	7	—
„ Vegetables	...	...	...	...	...	7	9
„ Fish	...	...	...	...	...	6	14
„ Preserves	...	...	...	...	...	6	8
„ Soup	...	...	...	...	...	1	14
Bacon	...	...	...	...	...	14	4
Meat	...	...	...	...	...	72	8
Fish	...	...	...	...	...	24	—

G. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR FOR THE YEAR 1956

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
NORTHFLEET URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the pleasure to submit my annual report for the year 1956.

The following tables give a general review of the work carried out :—

Number of complaints received during the year	...	...	...	438
Total number of visits made	...	...	...	1,934
Informal Notices served	...	...	...	114
Informal Notices complied with	...	...	...	116
Statutory Notices served	...	...	...	22
Statutory Notices complied with	...	...	...	20

Visits made by Public Health Inspectors during the year 1956 :—

Public Health Act, 1936	Primary visits	...	...	...	288
	Re-visits	...	...	...	190
	Infectious Disease visits	...	...	...	71
	Filthy and verminous premises	...	...	...	9
	Water supply enquiries	...	...	...	3
	Drainage inspections	...	...	...	85
	Drainage tested	...	...	...	112
	Moveable dwellings	...	...	...	8
Housing Act, 1936	Primary visits	...	...	...	119
	Re-visits	...	...	...	92
Food & Drugs Act, 1955	Food Preparing Rooms visited	...	...	...	129
	Samples taken :—				
	Ice cream	...	...	...	40
	Water	...	...	...	51
	Milk	...	...	...	36
	Sewage	...	...	...	24
	Foods condemned visits	...	...	...	13
Factories Acts, 1937 & 1948	Visits	...	...	...	29
	Re-visits	...	...	...	3
Shops Acts Visits	...	...	...	...	126
	Re-visits	...	...	...	8
Pest Extermination visits	...	...	...	...	87
Street Cleansing	...	...	...	...	27
Depots and Yards	...	...	...	...	130
Refuse Tip	...	...	...	...	91
Sewage Works	...	...	...	...	2
Refuse collection visits	...	...	...	...	15
Salvage	...	...	...	...	2
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	92
Smoke observations	...	...	...	...	14
Mortuary inspections	...	...	...	...	13
Public conveniences	...	...	...	...	1
Air pollution	...	...	...	...	15
Civil Defence	...	...	...	...	3
Animals	...	...	...	...	2

The following is a summary of nuisances and defects remedied during the year :—					
Accumulations of offensive refuse, etc., removed	...	...	...	...	I
Animals in an unfit state	...	...	...	...	2
Ceilings repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	18
Cesspools repaired, septic tanks repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	—
Chimney stacks repaired or rebuilt	...	...	...	...	4
Chimney flues repaired	...	...	...	...	I
Doors and frames repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	6
Drainage Systems :—					
Drains repaired or reconstructed	...	...	...	...	3
Drains cleansed	...	...	...	...	7
Gulley traps repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	—
Dustbins	...	...	...	...	3
Eaves gutters repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	11
Valley gutters repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	4
Fireplaces repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	3
Fireplaces, brickwork and plasterwork repaired	...	...	...	...	2
Floor repaired or relaid	...	...	...	...	11
Floors, sub-floor ventilation provided	...	...	...	...	—
Rainwater downspouts repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	9
Roofs repaired	...	...	...	...	33
Sinks repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	4
Premises redecorated or cleansed	...	...	...	...	I
Pest extermination and verminous and filthy rooms disinfected and cleansed	...	...	...	...	2
Walls, brickwork damp-proofed	...	...	...	...	61
Walls, internal plasterwork repaired	...	...	...	...	27
Walls, external repaired	...	...	...	...	5
Water closets :—					
External structure repaired	...	...	...	...	3
Internal structure repaired	...	...	...	...	5
Flushing cisterns repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	3
Pedestal pan and traps repaired	...	...	...	...	6
Water supply, pipes, etc., repaired	...	...	...	...	4
Windows, woodwork of frames, sashes or sills repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	25
Sash lines provided	...	...	...	...	6
Yard surfaces repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	2
Smoke nuisance	...	...	...	...	4
Natural Lighting improved	...	...	...	...	I
Fences repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	2

INFECTION AND DISINFECTION.

The Northfleet Council have an arrangement with the Strood Rural District Council and Swanscombe Urban District Council whereby facilities for disinfection of premises and articles are provided by the Northfleet Council, on a rechargeable basis. Infected articles are treated at the steam-disinfection station at Brookvale Depot, Northfleet, and the premises are sprayed with formalin solution and formaldehyde gas. Transport is provided by Northfleet.

During the year 121 visits were made investigating cases of infectious disease and supervising the work of disinfecting. After such disinfection it is emphasised to the householders that their premises should be thoroughly cleansed.

The following is the statement of disinfecting carried out during the year :—

			Northfleet.	Swanscombe.	Strood.
Scarlet Fever	...	...	31	18	2
Tuberculosis	...	...	4	I	6
Cancer	...	...	—	I	—
Poliomyelitis	...	...	I	—	—
Measles	...	...	I	—	—

INFESTATION AND DISINFESTATION.

Ten premises were treated for bed bugs by spraying with a liquid insecticide followed by fumigation with sulphur candles. Bedding and clothing also, where necessary, being treated at the Brookvale Depot.

BAKEHOUSES.

The four bakehouses operating within the district were inspected regularly during the year. In one bakehouse a modern coke burning oven replaced the old coal-fired Peel oven.

FOOD HYGIENE REGULATIONS, 1955.

These Regulations, made under the Food and Drugs Act, 1955, came into operation during the year, and all food premises were inspected and explanatory leaflets and display posters were issued to the shopkeepers, and advice given upon the Regulations and their requirements.

During the year, one shopkeeper was warned about smoking in a food room.

RATS AND MICE.

A scheme of pest control operated on lines approved by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries is now in operation in the district. The following is a summary of the work carried out :—

Premises inspected during the year	...	...	1,028
Premises found to be infested with rats		...	89
Premises found to be infested with mice		...	20
Premises treated by Local Authority	...	...	96

DRAIN TESTING.

In addition to existing drainage all new drainage works are inspected and tested by the Public Health Inspectors. During the year 85 inspections were made and on 112 occasions tests of the various systems were carried out.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

The following list shows details of factories inspected during the year 1956 :—

(1) Inspections.

Premises.	Number on Register.	Inspections.	Number of Notices.	Prose- cutions.
(i) Factories in which Secs. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities ...	6	6	—	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) to which Sec. 7 applies ...	29	31	3	—
Total ...	35	37	3	—

(2) Cases in which defects were found.

Particulars.	No. of cases in which defects were found.					
	Found.	Remedied.	Referred To H.M. Inspectors.	By H.M. Inspectors.	Prosecutions.	
Want of Cleanliness (S1) ...	1	1	—	—	—	
Overcrowding (S2) ...	—	—	—	—	—	
Unreasonable Temperature (S3) ...	—	—	—	—	—	
Inadequate Ventilation (S4) ...	—	—	—	—	—	
Ineffective Drainage of floors (S6) ...	—	—	—	—	—	
Sanitary Conveniences (S7) ...	—	—	—	—	—	
(a) Insufficient ...	—	—	—	—	—	
(b) Unsuitable or defective ...	2	2	—	—	—	
(c) Not separate for sexes ...	—	—	—	—	—	
Total ...	3	3	—	—	—	

PUBLIC CLEANSING DEPARTMENT.

During the year 8,548 tons (estimated) of refuse were collected and disposed of by means of controlled tipping.

NEW TIPPING SITE.

The present tipping site near Springhead Recreation Ground should be filled during the coming year (1957), and a joint tipping scheme is proposed in conjunction with the Borough of Gravesend. Pit 19, under the County Planning Scheme, which is sited between Vale Road, Springhead Road and Waterdales, should make an ideal site, but it will require a certain amount of preparatory work, i.e., a new access road at a point which would be safer for both access and exit, with a commencing point on the south side of the pit where there is already a ramp which could be improved for that purpose.

Northfleet would operate the scheme. A Hydraulic Shovel and a Muledozer would be used for pushing and consolidating the refuse, with the object of excavating an old tip which is nearby, the contents of which are now quite inert, and therefore material suitable for covering purposes. This should provide tipping space for about 20 years, and will re-claim 25 acres of land.

CESSPOOL AND GULLEY EMPTYING.

During the year 252 cesspools were emptied. The cesspool emptying vehicle is also used for emptying and cleansing surface water gulleys on the highways, and storm-well soakaways.

As new houses and roads come into use the services of this particular vehicle for catchpit and gulley emptying is being increasingly required.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

J. S. COWPLAND,
Chief Public Health Inspector,
Cleansing Superintendent.

